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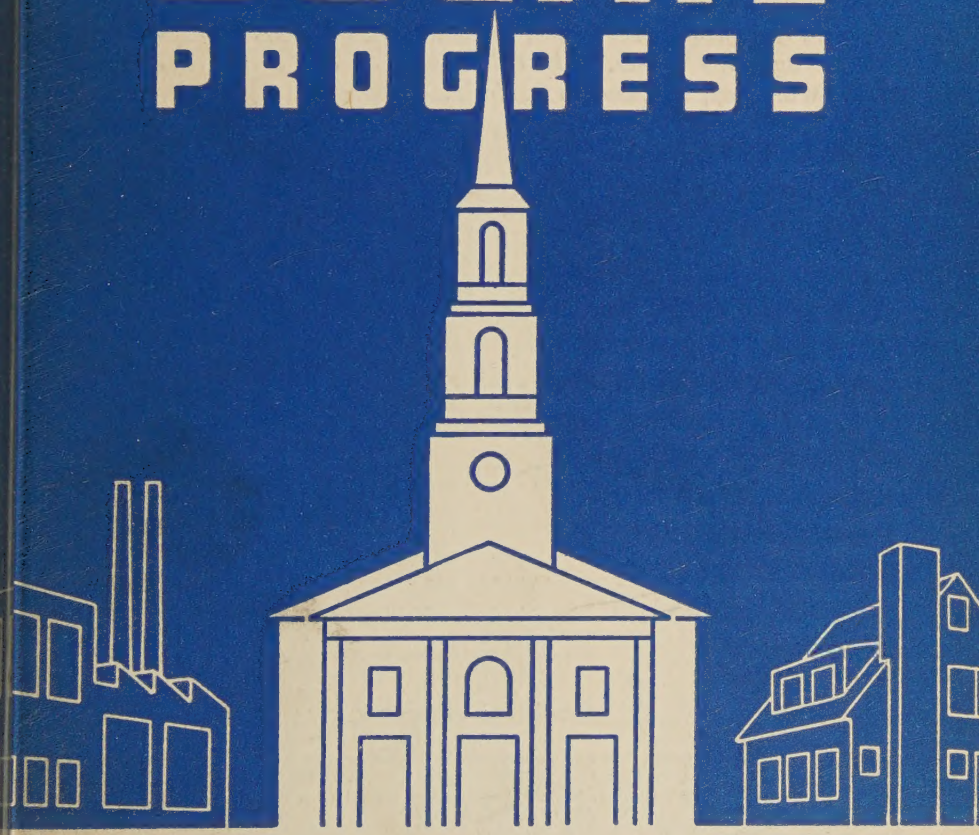
SOCIAL PROGRESS



Must They Starve?
Drinking in the Movies
The Workshop

JANUARY 1941

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Social Progress

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SOCIAL PROGRESS

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Beyond Selfishness

By David Braun *

JESUS' last sermon to his disciples was fittingly enough addressed to the subject of last things. It was a profoundly moving sermon and they must have hung upon his every word as he poured out his great soul to them in the few precious moments still left of his life. He was giving them deep doctrine there upon the Mount of Olives and the heartbeat of history could be heard in his words. And then in that solemn moment, only two days before the end, he said quite simply, "If you want to please me very much, if you want me to recognize you in the Kingdom, you be kind, be generous, be thoughtful, and never let a hungry or needy person go empty handed, for whenever you do any good thing for your brother man you will be doing it for me."

At first reading we look upon this command of Jesus to visit the sick and clothe and feed the needy and say, "now this is something sensible, here is something practical that we can do." This is not as impractical, and impossible as Jesus' ridiculous advice to "sell all you have and give it to the poor" or "if a man takes away your cloak give him your coat also." On second thought I wonder if it is not just as impossible as some of his other teachings. Who among us has the means to feed every hungry person he knows about, who has time to visit all the sick, or the inclination to hurry to all the jails to minister to the prisoners? Not very many of us at any rate and probably none. But here are Jesus' words; and very plain words they are too. What shall we do with them?

In the first place we notice that Jesus says in effect "give yourself." He did not give them a lecture on the nature of Christian charity. He simply said, "*You do something.*

* Minister, Swarthmore Presbyterian Church, Swarthmore, Pa.

You feed the hungry, *you* give water to the thirsty, *you* shelter the stranger and visit the sick and the imprisoned."

It is obvious that we are in a day when the fearful harvest of selfishness and greed threatens to overwhelm man and all his works. We are observing throughout the nation a great movement toward unity in the face of world crisis. No one should carelessly condemn it; but let the church and the Christian beware lest this unity leads to the same kind of insane patriotism and selfish nationalism that already threatens us with destruction from without. Surely this is a time for the nation to go beyond selfishness.

"He that loseth his life . . . shall find it," said Jesus. He was not talking idly. He was announcing an unrepealable law of life on the individual and national and international level alike.

In the second place Jesus made it quite plain that the only way the disciples could go beyond selfishness was to go beyond themselves. Everyone who has thought at all seriously about the Christian faith has come full upon the problem of Christ's impossibles. Martin Dibelius in his last book on "The Sermon on the Mount" concludes that the sermon does not so much set forth a code or an ideal as it provides a final stimulus. We are not able, he suggests, *to perform it* in its full scope but we are able *to be transformed by it.*

Let us be quite specific. What shall we do with the countless appeals for help that come to us? We cannot answer them all and therefore we face the subtle temptation to answer none of them. Are our churches and are we individually prepared in this desperate time to go beyond selfishness? Yes, more than that, are we prepared to go beyond unselfishness and share sacrificially with the hurt and the hungry of all the world? Surely the Christian can never say, "this much I can do and no more." For the Christian there is always a *beyond* which compels him beyond himself. If we do not set before ourselves an impossible ideal then we shall not attain even the possible.

Last year a young woman, a member of my church, just graduated from college came to my study to say good-bye. "I am going back to China," she said. With characteristic blindness I said, "What for? What can you offer a nation and people whose condition is so hopeless?" I should have known better. I think I know better now, for this was her answer: "I am going back to China and if there is nothing else to do I can always help people who are beyond help."

One thing I know! *Wherever* Jean is she is going beyond selfishness, beyond unselfishness, and beyond herself; and the people around her are no longer beyond help.

Must They Starve?

A Symposium

No Butter for Nazi Guns

By Melvin V. Oggel *

The proposal to send food to the Nazi-dominated parts of Europe is unacceptable to most of us who are non-pacifists, but it certainly poses the toughest ethical problem we have had to face. If we say, "The Nazis alone are responsible for this food shortage; it's their problem, not ours," the obvious answer is that the Christian is not excused from serving a need because others are guilty of creating it. If we say, "The Hoover plan is lacking in realism and in fairness to Britain," the obvious answer is, "What, then, is *your* plan?" Well, the truth is we have none, for the simple reason that we have no intention of feeding Germany's victims! For to do so would add to the effectiveness of workers she is impressing into her war industries. It would also, as has lately been asserted, "release her from the danger of revolt among the conquered people and the danger of disease which might spread to her occupying armies and into Germany itself, and thus strengthen her for further conquests."

The stark fact is, then, that we do not plan to carry out what is ordinarily regarded as a plain Christian obligation. If it were a question of denying food to a hungry Hitler, we would have clear moral sailing. Our pacifist friends would then have to try to get food to a hungry Hitler, since they take the injunctions in the last two verses of Romans 12 as absolute— "If thine enemy hunger, feed him"; and "overcome evil with good." We non-pacifists, however, read on into the first four verses of Romans 13, where Paul calls the magistrate who overcomes the evil-doer with the sword "the minister of God," from which we conclude that the injunctions in question are shown to be relative by their context; in other words that Paul saw that there are times when it is a service to God to overcome the evil-doer with cruel weapons.

Now, if it were a question of denying food to the masses of Germany, we would not have equally clear moral sailing, since they are Hitler's dupes rather than his accomplices. Yet here we can rightly fall back on the principle of collective responsibility. One man may have incited a mob to lynch a Negro, but every mobster can legally be punished for the crime. Similarly, a people must be held responsible

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* Minister, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, Nebraska. (See page 17 for editorial comment under "That They May Eat.")

for a war a leader gets them to start, especially when the great majority idolize him; wherefore it is right to employ stern measures to thwart their evil will.

But the question is not, shall we feed our enemies? The question is, shall we feed our friends? The question is not, shall we repay evil with evil? The question is, shall we repay innocence with evil? For the Belgians and the Dutch are not even Hitler's dupes. They are his victims. In their present plight, they are "the least of these, my brethren" to starve whom is to starve Him. Surely it never occurred to me until now that *that* might be a relative command!

Even so, I am compelled to oppose the Hoover scheme. To me the cardinal moral necessity in the European situation is that British arms be victorious. If Hitler enslaves Europe, every Christian value we cherish will be crucified there and menaced everywhere else. Accordingly, if an unbroken British blockade is of military value, as it doubtless is, we have no moral right to ask that it be lifted. Cruel as the effects of that blockade are, it is justified by the object it serves, which is to prevent the enthronement of cruelty as a principle of conduct in the affairs of a continent. It is a choice between the unwilling and temporary cruelty of the surgeon and the sadistic and long-time cruelty of the brute.

It cannot be Christian to feed the hungry if thereby you condemn "the source-lands of our culture" to a long barbarian night. It cannot be Christian to harrass "those who know what freedom is" in their heroic stand against "those who only know what power is."

I hasten to add that we Americans have no moral right to condemn millions of war victims to the slow torture of starvation and malnutrition without ourselves making every possible sacrifice to beat Hitler. If it is so important to beat Hitler that our consciences constrain us to consent to a horrible fate for these unoffending millions, then our consciences ought to constrain us to insure Hitler's defeat by giving the British our prompt and full economic and military support so that these innocents shall not have suffered and died in vain.

I have long shrunk back from this conclusion, but I can no longer avoid it. Christians cannot rest content with a safe and comfortable and profitable neutrality, while affirming, "the stakes in this conflict are so vital to Christianity that we must let our brethren starve rather than lift a finger to help them." In simple decency we cannot take the easy way out. We must feed the famished or fight the tyrant. We cannot escape the judgment of our Lord on those who give no meat to the hungry unless we take on ourselves the reproach of intervention.

But the pacifist also faces a dilemma. For all he knows, the food we send to the Nazis' victims would release that much more food for German chemists to convert into military uses. In a broadcast from London on November 19, M. B. Priestley, after citing some revealing figures, said: "Therefore, what began as a nice warm-hearted gesture from Mr. Hoover and his friends could end—as far as we here are concerned—with more bombing planes dropping more high explosive bombs on us, blasting hell out of our cities and murdering our women and children."

It has recently been asserted that we who take this side of the debate are for doing evil that good may abound. Rather, we are for refraining from doing good that evil may not abound. An exclusive emphasis on kindness, involving a hamstringing of equally valid values like liberty and justice, does not make for an increase of kindness. As Reinhold Niebuhr has been telling us for years, it is criminal folly suddenly to inject an alleged ethical absolute into a situation compounded of relativities.

Meanwhile, let us join Winston Churchill in carrying out a project which manages to be humane and at the same time serviceable to the cause of European freedom. "We shall do our best," says Churchill, "to encourage the building up of reserves of food all over the world, so that there will always be held up before the eyes of the people of Europe, including—I say it deliberately—the German and Austrian people, the certainty that the shattering of the Nazi power will bring to them all immediate food, freedom, and peace."

The Four Horsemen Ride Again

By Ray Freeman Jenney *

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: *Plague, War, Famine, Death,* are riding the earth once more, and as a result, according to conservative estimates, millions of men, women, and children in Europe face starvation this winter. These people are not belligerents but the victims of war. Particularly is it true that there will be dire need of food in Finland, Belgium, Norway, Holland, and Poland and possibly in Denmark and so-called *free* France. Especially those in the cities will face starvation by midwinter if food from outside does not reach them.

The people living in the invaded and occupied countries are caught between the mill-stones of German occupation and the stringent British blockade. Food will not be provided by either belligerent, and unless they can be fed by a neutral commission which secures agreements, from the British on the one

* Minister, Park Central Presbyterian Church, Syracuse, New York.

hand to let food through, and Germany on the other hand that it will not be seized, a death sentence has been passed upon these people, ten million of whom are children.

The role that the United States should play in this grim drama has been a matter of controversy ever since Herbert Hoover announced a plan on the eleventh of last August for the shipping of food stuff into these countries. The details of this plan should be well known through the wide publicity given this matter in newspapers and magazines, both secular and religious, and over the radio. Among those who, without sentimentality, believe the proposal to be both wise and workable are these well known men: General John J. Pershing, Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, General Charles W. Dawes, Charles Francis Adams, Henry P. Fletcher and Hendrik Willem van Loon.

Opposition to the plan has been voiced by a group of well-known educators and clergymen. They admit and regret the fact that there are so many millions of innocent people in Europe who are threatened with starvation, disease, and death, but they state "we will lend ourselves to no plan which might directly or indirectly strengthen the enemies of democracy." They overlook the fact that the deadliest enemies of democracy are neither political or military but hunger and disease plus the psychological devastation that follows fear and the disintegration which hunger and disease bring. Although they are deeply sympathetic with the suffering of these innocent people, they further state that "between the agony of empty stomachs for a time in one part of the world and the agony of stricken souls in every part of the world there can be but one choice." That choice is opposition to the plan for sending food. The alternative is not as easy as that; the alternative is life and death. Furthermore this group of educators and clergymen offer no substitute plan. Can we be passive spectators, looking on, doing nothing?

More recently, a group of women under the leadership of Mrs. Henry Goddard Leach, "have reluctantly reached the decision that we cannot subscribe to the plan submitted by Mr. Hoover." They give as the main reason that "the feeding of enslaved Normandy, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Poland helps the Nazis to maintain order in their countries." It is thus argued that if the hungry people of Europe are left unfed they will make trouble and revolt and this will turn the tide against Hitler. Surely, this plan to let individuals suffer to the end that they might revolt is questionable morality, and we ask—is this not advocating the nihilism we all seek to destroy? Furthermore, we must recognize the possibility that this might be a two-edged sword

for instead of defeating Hitler this method might result in an outbreak of anarchism that would usher in a new dark age in all Europe, and also disease of a virulent nature in the form of typhus and influenza would inevitably follow—pestilence knows no national boundary. We do not wish to help the Nazis win, but of what value are military victories if humanitarianism and civilization are lost? Means and ends are so intertwined that a wrong means will almost certainly corrupt the best of ends. Let us not sacrifice humanity on the altar of power politics.

The Hoover Plan has been approved in principle by the World Relief Committee of the Northern Baptist Convention and the General Council of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. The executive committee of the Federal Council has also expressed "the earnest hope that some way may be found and measures adopted which will alleviate the suffering of innocent millions, without strengthening the hands of the aggressors." Throughout the country smaller groups, religious and secular, have favored the Hoover Plan or some similar plan. Briefly stated the reasons for this are: 1. It would be to the selfish advantage of everyone, belligerents, victims, neutrals, to avoid the spread of deadly pestilence and the revolt that might lead to widespread anarchy or communism. 2. It would be to the economic advantage of the United States to sell our surplus grain. 3. Realistically, can Britain afford to create a continent full of hatred and ill-will that will inevitably follow mass starvation? 4. But for Christians, the issues are neither economic, political, nor military. They are far simpler and far more basic.

While sincere Christians may differ on this question, we can not escape the definite teachings of Christ. It was a murderer who asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Shall we blot out of our Bibles the world's noblest answer to this question given in the parable of the Good Samaritan? What shall we do with the searching sentence in the judgment scene, "I was hungry and you gave me no meat . . . ?" Are human beings the temples of God? Are *all* men brothers of Christ? Have we lost our high regard for human life and our sense of responsibility for other human beings? This is not "moralistic sentimentality"; it is stark realism. We know the evil in man but shall we add to that evil by our smug selfishness and complacent religiosity? The fact remains that the Christian way of life can not be put in cold storage at our convenience either in times of peace or war. Shall we, *can* we give stones of selfishness in place of the bread of life? We all stand before the judgment seat of humaneness, civilization and Christ. *What do you believe?*

World Organization for Peace

By James T. Shotwell *

OUR previous series of broadcasts closed last May at the very time when Germany unleashed the dogs of war against the peaceful peoples of Holland and Belgium. All of the plans for world peace, which had inspired us with hope, even while we disagreed on method, were being dashed to earth by the greatest war makers the world has ever seen. To talk of the organization of peace under these conditions might well have seemed to be deluding ourselves by wishful thinking. But this was not the judgment of our listeners. This nation-wide interest in a discussion of our past mistakes and future possibilities at a time of tragic disillusionment is a heartening fact, for it shows that we are at last aware that the challenge to world peace has become a challenge to civilization itself.

Mussolini and Hitler had never left us in the dark as to the nature of their designs. They had frankly stated their reliance on war, not merely to achieve victory in the conflict but to erect a new state system based upon military power so as to be able to impose their will upon enslaved populations. Frankly, this program of the totalitarian rulers seemed to us too absurdly grandiose to awaken any serious concern on our part, until the process of enslavement actually began. Then we discovered that there was more behind it than mere militarism. Continental Europe found itself overrun by a new crusade which swept away the institutions of liberty and justice, offered a new world order, and set about realizing it. Their use of war to gain power would only be an incident in history if they did not continue to rely upon the war system in the years of peace; all history shows that tyranny cannot endure except by the continued use of militarism. In short, the present world crisis challenges the whole nature of civilization; because if Hitler wins, the system he uses is one that will make future peace synonymous with servitude.

There are, therefore, two aspects of the European struggle, the actual war between European nations and the challenge to civilization everywhere. Against the possible spread of war we are rapidly strengthening our defenses with the mobilization of a new army and the building of fleets for sea and air. But the more we study the strategy of the dictators, the more we see the need of matching their economic and po-

* Professor of History, Columbia University, and chairman of the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace. Condensed with permission of the speaker and the Columbia Broadcasting System from a broadcast of November 9, 1940.

litical preparedness. We know now that the defenses of our country will remain inadequate unless we put as much thought upon how to assure the maintenance of freedom under the regime of peace as the militarists are putting into the problems of maintaining efficiency under the iron discipline of war.

This means that in addition to consolidating democracy at home we must come to grips with the final problem of world peace, for we see now that so long as the war system lasts there never can be security for the institutions of freedom.

It was to meet this second half of our national problem that the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace was founded last year and has been working with little interruption ever since. At a time like this, when the old landmarks are disappearing, we must keep our bearings and chart our course so as not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Of these there have been many, but they are chiefly due to inexperience. We had never seriously bothered about international affairs before the outbreak of the World War. The shock of finding ourselves involved in that cataclysm stirred discussion from one end of the country to the other. Unfortunately dissention arose between those who advocated membership in the League of Nations and those who held to the tradition of isolation. The result was that throughout "the twenties" we widened our horizon to include world politics but lacked singleness of purpose and understanding. We tried half measures with whole-hearted enthusiasm.

Every serious student of international affairs knows that we must put something in the place of war if we are to get rid of it. But the experience of the last few years has also taught us that it is not enough to set up international institutions. We have at last learned the rather obvious fact that unless these institutions are effectively supported by the nations which create them, we have only a façade and not a working organization in international affairs.

The Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, therefore, prefaces its report by the statement that "No system of law and organization can be of value without the living faith and spirit behind and in it. No world organization can succeed without mutual confidence on the part of its members. We are only too sadly aware, however, that this confidence is lacking in the world today and to create it and maintain it is perhaps the hardest problem that civilization has ever faced.

No one nation can any longer find within its own borders all the essentials for its livelihood. Under these conditions the only sure defense of the civilized world against the universal anarchy of totalitarian

war is constructive statesmanship to organize the ample resources of nature so that all can live abundantly. This problem, up till now, has been largely left to local and national governments, but they cannot solve it alone. The laboring man's living standards are affected by those of other countries; factories are idle for lack of needed foreign materials; and the farmer's income is affected by foreign markets. These and many others are problems which can only be solved internationally; but the path of that solution is blocked by embattled nations and by distrust and uncertainty arising from past wars.

At the close of the last war the League of Nations was an effort to achieve unity by agreement. We do not propose to retrace the tragic history of that great effort, but to learn from its failures as well as its successes. Above all, we recognize that the organization of peace calls for the renunciations of the absolute right of nations to maintain aggressive armaments or to deny certain human and cultural rights which bring subject populations under the tyranny of the strong. Peace is a function of justice. There can be no permanent peace which fails to recognize this fundamental fact.

But justice is a vague if splendid word. It is not the asserted claim of any one party. It is determined by the judgment of the community, for which international tribunals must be provided. Above all, it must be translated into action in commerce, finance, and the interests of labor. Fortunately we have made a good start in dealing with the problems of social justice in that one international organization at Geneva of which the United States is a member, the International Labor Organization. This is a body in which private citizens representing labor and capital meet with the representatives of government to eliminate unfair competition and raise the standard of living throughout the world. It is now in exile with its offices in Canada but the principle for which it stands has met with general agreement even among totalitarian states.

In fields like this, and others like public health, the stamping out of contagious plagues, the increase of food supplies for ill-nourished peoples, and other matters of social welfare, we have already begun to recognize a world community of interests. The International Chamber of Commerce has carried on an equally brave fight for the recognition of common interests in commerce and finance. These are the allies of the movement to create a world of law and order instead of brute force, but the way must be cleared for them by political agreements between responsible governments of forward looking nations.

Success or failure in this task will be the final test of civilization.

Drinking in the Movies *

By Bert H. Davis

"I saw them do it in the movies" is a poor excuse for your drinking. Unless, of course, you are willing to be wholly realistic and fill your cocktail glasses with fruit juice, soft drinks or—tepid tea. Anything in fact that looks like an alcoholic beverage but has none of its effects.

For drinking on the screen is as much a matter of make-believe as are the movie plots. You know that William Powell is not really a master-detective, and that Myrna Loy is not really his wife. They're just that way in "The Thin Man" make-believe. The mental stimulation that the actor appears to gain from his frequent resorts to bottle or glass is just more of the make-believe of movieland. The truth is that the actors and actresses who sparkle so brilliantly on the screen in the midst of the cocktails, high-balls and mountain-dew would be fading stars if the drinks they consume so nonchalantly were actually alcoholic.

The manufacturing industry that packs romance and glamour and history into cans has the same attitude toward alcoholic drinks as first class railroads, air lines, munitions plants, industry in general, retail stores that win the consumer's confidence.

The "No Drinking" warning is as necessary, as elementary, for Disney's animators and M-G-M's lab crew and Warner's galaxy of stars as for the pilot of a mainliner and the powder-makers at duPont's. Even the bit-player's "morning after" is enough to make a director tear his hair, while a pair of bleary eyes a few days before the grand premiere may leave the best parts of the picture on the cutting-room floor. Yes, strictly-business Hollywood, manufacturing and vending moving pictures—in the U. S. alone, a two-billion-dollar industry—won't put up with liquor.

The young woman who plays the inebriated part doesn't drink, never did, probably never will. The beverage she is taking never has fermented and never will. Like her, the soft drink or fruit juice is playing a part in front of the camera. Hollywood's camera-caught drinks are phonies.

And we're forced to believe that the drinking situations with which movies are loaded are also phonies. It's your guess why they are in the movies in such quantities and with so little reason or excuse. But surely one reason is that drinking situations are used by the movie

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* Reprinted with permission from *The Allied Youth*, Washington, D.C., issue of December, 1940.

makers to create the atmosphere of suspense, excitement, "can't-tell-what-will-happen-next!"

Nothing could better prepare some folks for a realization of "something's bound to bust now" than a buildup of excitement through a drinking scene. Think of all the tavern and saloon scenes you may have witnessed in the "galloping tintypes," and how the dramatic suspense was built up with the realization that the characters, liquorized, were not going to do the normal, sensible, controlled acts that the self-controlled and alcohol-free do.

Besides using alcohol for stimulated excitement, the screen stories go to liquor for what is called—in the dollar-word-department—motivation. Drunkenness is funny to one director. It's an introduction to crime and disloyalty, for another picture-maker. Each treatment is a device of excitement and make-believe. It's coming to you, remember, from a town where liquor can't mix with the business of making movies.

Then there's the "Thin Man" formula: Here a pleasant character is "pleasantly lubricated." Drink follows drink, until in real life the consumer would go off into a corner to sleep. But the movie imbiber becomes more charming, clever, composed, gentlemanly. At first he was an ordinary mortal; now he becomes more than a match for other intellects and evidently the drinks constitute the reason. Yes, the action is as phony as the drinks that the "Thin Man" and his imitators consume. But to the crowd in the Palace down Main Street, Moviedom sells the idea that drinking does something favorable and wholesome to personality!

We're seeing movie drivers nowadays that turn their backs on all the advice of the National Safety Council and other traffic specialists who are greatly concerned about the drinking driver. I don't like booing, but perhaps a boo would help the next time heroic Dr. Ted snatches a highball before he starts driving on icy roads on an errand of mercy.

No, it's not life as characters of the grade and ability pictured would live it. Hollywood should hear from us when it damages a girl's or boy's screen personality. We know—doesn't Hollywood?—that we'll remember Janet Gaynor drunk long after we've forgotten what the picture was all about. And is it pleasant so to remember Janet Gaynor?

Within the movie industry itself, many prominent figures are warring against the over-emphasis on drinking and drunkenness in the pictures. You can help these forces by your criticism, directed to the offending actor, to the producer, and to the theatre that projected the story. Let's do our part to convince Hollywood that American youth wants movies alcohol-free!

The Workshop

By Cameron P. Hall *

WITH this issue, SOCIAL PROGRESS begins a new regular feature, *The Workshop*. Here, month by month, we will get right down to the *doing* of our social concern as Christians. *The Workshop* will carry suggestions and discussions on programs, methods, and procedures in social education and action. By and large, the local church will be the focus of our vision, but at times we will see ourselves in cooperative relationships in the community and beyond.

The Workshop will also bring before us what you are doing in this phase of the Church's program. Obviously this must be a cooperative venture in which all will share; for unless you report what your church and church groups are doing, the rest of us will never learn of it. What are the churches doing? Help us to answer that question in *The Workshop* each month.

Getting Under Way

There are several means that leaders throughout our churches have found effective in getting a group started and under way in social education and action. We are thinking now not of groups that have advanced backgrounds or particular interests in the social outreach of the church, but those who have a general concern in what the church should do but lack experience in this phase of Christian activity. Inasmuch as social education and action, as set up by General Assembly in recent years, is somewhat new, it is to be expected that these latter groups are the more typical. How may social education and action be brought into their programs?

One method is to discover first just where the focus (or level) of interest of the members of the group is. This method has the virtue of being soundly educational, for education begins where people are. An "interest finder" gives each group an opportunity to reflect its more congenial concerns. The Department of Social Education and Action can supply, *free*, a social interest check list. When filled out by the group and the replies compiled by the leaders, these furnish a consensus of social interest that affords a pattern for building a program.

"What does the Presbyterian Church stand for in social issues?" Studying the answer to this question is another effective approach. For some thirty years, the Church has been supplying material for

* Director of the Department of Social Education and Action of the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education.

such a study through the social pronouncements of General Assembly. The pronouncements of General Assembly, 1940, are available from the Department of Social Education and Action, free; as is also a leaflet, "The Church Speaks on Social Issues," a discussion guide based on these most recent social pronouncements; and "Social Education and Action in Your Church: Questions Answered," a leaflet in which this matter is further elaborated. These are helpful aids to a better understanding of the vision and conviction of our Church on social issues.

A third approach brings us into actual contact with social conditions in the community or area in which the church is situated. What is the situation just "over our backyard" or "across the tracks?" What are the problems of these neighbors who must live on low incomes or are members of minority groups—Mexicans, Negroes, migrants, share croppers and others? What are the anti-social forces in the locality of which we are citizens? What are the playground facilities, the medical resources? To press a little beyond what we now know of these conditions is to have eye-opening experiences and conscience-stirring ones as well.

Closely akin to this approach, is the program that brings us into association with those men and women who are on the social frontiers of our community life. Under the auspices of private and public agencies, their vocations bring them daily into relationship with our fellow citizens who suffer economic hardship and social discrimination. Welfare workers know at first hand what the situation is for families in socially disintegrated areas of town and country; judges and probation officers and sheriffs are close to the factors that make for, and the consequences that follow upon, crime. Public school principals and teachers are in closest touch with the many anti-social conditions that endanger childhood and youth. Labor leaders and personnel managers in industry can speak out of first hand knowledge on labor problems. Supervisors of WPA and FSA are dealing daily with the human costs of unemployment and rural life disorganization. The list might be extended, but the point is clear that in every locality there are leaders engaged in seeking to rehabilitate and conserve the human resources of our communities and social life. In many ways, they represent the community conscience at work, and a better understanding and closer acquaintance between them and the church should prove of inestimable value to both. Let the churches take the initiative!

A final suggestion for getting a group interested is that the group undertake a series of studies on living issues before the American people. Congress begins a new

session in January and our foreign relations and our policy toward social legislation in the light of the national defense program are major national issues. Also, our 48 state legislatures will be in session in 1941, and measures dealing with liquor, gambling and many other social issues are quite certain to be pressed. Out of these current issues rises the query, "What are the relevant facts, and what are the moral and spiritual factors that Christians should consider in reaching their own convictions?" Addresses by speakers especially competent in presenting facts and studied opinions, in person or over the radio, and discussions by the members of the groups themselves make up fruitful programs which aid the formation of *Christian* public opinion.

All this, some readers will be thinking, is education perhaps, but it does not indicate action. This is acknowledged! Next month the discussion will focus on methods and projects of action. In the meantime we cite three illustrative activities:

Group Projects:

A Student Pastor writes that "a student group visited the Ohio State Bureau of Unemployment, founded in 1890 and the oldest in the United States, where we saw the adaptation tests given for various skills, etc. We then went to the Poindexter Village, a housing project, 100 per cent Negro. The students were thrilled.

"Not content with information only, these students decided to give a Christmas party for thirty orphans of high school age and to supply milk, shoes, and some clothing for an underprivileged family to be paid for by contributions. Not bad!"

A minister reports: "The Presbyterian church of Woodstown, N. J., a church with a membership of 152, has recently completed a venture in bringing the subject of social education and action before the local congregation. A series of six week-night forums on the general theme, "The Presbyterian Church Speaks on Social Problems," met with an unusually favorable response and decided interest was evident. Some twenty people participated in the study and discussion."

The Christian Answer in a World at War was the theme of a series of meetings reported by the Calvary Presbyterian Church in Wyncote, Pa. Older members recalled with regret statements made in churches during the first World War. They wished they might not be repeated. A letter sent to the congregation citing the recent pronouncements of the General Assembly upon war, was followed at the congregational meeting by the adoption of resolutions based on these declarations. Later three meetings were planned to explore the spiritual testimony, strengthen Christian philosophy and deepen personal conviction in relation to war.

For Tim

The Church Must Act

A group of laymen who are both leaders in the business life of New York City and officers in its Presbyterian churches met recently at the invitation of one of their members for dinner and the evening. It was suggested that because of their leading relationship to both business and church life, they might discuss informally whether the church should feel a concern toward affecting the economic and industrial order—and why. No agenda had been previously sent out, so the course of the conversation followed the thinking of the men present.

Early, it was found that there was a unanimous consensus of conviction that the church not only should but must seek to affect the economic order, and after some two and a half hours of discussion, the group agreed on the following major reasons for this position.

First, because the fact of poverty in our nation has grave moral consequences. Conditions that root in poverty are outstanding in their power to undermine the great objectives of the Christian church, namely, Christian character and the Christian home.

Secondly, with an impoverished Europe and an impoverished Asia on either side, the economic life of our nation will be subjected after the present wars are over to unprecedented strains and stresses; if as a nation we are to weather this crisis, the resources of Christian thought and action in the economic order will be indispensable.

Thirdly, if the church is to enlist and hold the younger generation, then youth must be made to feel the relevance and challenge of the Christian message to pressing social problems, among which those that center in the economic order are so paramount. Here is where life impinges poignantly and vitally on youth in its quest for meaning and power, and the church must meet youth on this level if it is to serve and win youth.

Fourthly, the church, which is organized Christianity, and the labor movement, which is organized labor, are too far apart in life today. In many—too many—places labor feels the church is out of sympathy, and the church in turn frequently—too frequently—mistrusts the program of labor. We are here facing not a theory, but a condition; the fact is that the ranks of labor are not within the church. The laymen studied this situation in terms of the churches which they themselves represented. Within the official bodies of their own churches, were there those who are of labor? And, within their church memberships, were there labor officials? The

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answers were a revealing, "No." However divided the responsibility for this condition is, those of the church must look to themselves for the cause and the remedy. The group was convinced that this is an intolerable situation to a fellowship that seeks to bring Christ to all men and into all life.

JAMES S. CUSHMAN, *Guest Editor*

That They May Eat

Elsewhere in this issue the Hoover Plan for feeding the starving in Europe is discussed pro and con. This matter is before the members of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. for special consideration, because of the communication recently addressed to all the ministers from the General Council. The letter was sent, as it states, "in order that you may take such action in reference to it as you may deem expedient." SOCIAL PROGRESS makes available these two articles, in which the issue is so well drawn, as an aid to our churches and membership in seeking the mind of Christ upon this complex problem of human need.

The communication, signed by the Stated Clerk, follows:

"The General Council of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America at its last meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, on October 22d-23d, 1940, received a communication from the Honorable Herbert Hoover, former President of the United States, a copy of which is herewith enclosed. The General Council gave serious consideration to the whole plan for the relief of starving millions in Belgium, Norway, Holland, and Poland and finally adopted the following action: That the Stated Clerk be authorized to send Mr. Hoover's printed communication to the pastors of our Church; and that the following recommendation be adopted: That the General Council endorse the principle enunciated by the Commission for the Relief of Belgium, and the Norwegian Relief Fund, the Queen Wilhelmina Fund (Holland), and the Commission for Polish Relief, pertaining to the feeding of starving millions in these four countries this winter.

"The salient points in the plan are:

"1. No appropriation of funds from America; no appeals for charity. These commissions will purchase, transport, and administer the distribution of food-stuffs to their own people.

"2. Proper restrictions would be required from both Germany and Great Britain with regard to the transportation of these food-stuffs, and use by their countries.

"3. The attempt would be made upon an experimental basis, to be terminated upon 24 hours' notice if the agreements should be broken by either party.

"We believe that this program represents essentially the spirit of our faith, and that nothing less than this can be considered truly Christian.

"In accordance with the above action and at Mr. Hoover's expense, I am sending this communication to you in order that you may take such action with reference to it as you may deem expedient."

As this issue goes to press, Great Britain's reiteration of its decision of August 20 to refuse "passage of food through the blockade" is announced. In the light of these developments, the "Committee on Food for the Five Small Democracies" announces its intention to "search for a plan that will be acceptable to the governments concerned."

Prayer Without Frontiers

There is a special importance to the *Universal Week of Prayer*, January 5-12. Though national policies may divide us into warring fragments, in prayer we are united across these frontiers. Within both China and Japan, within both Great Britain and Germany there will be Christians who are with us in a "world fellowship of prayer."

The word "universal" not only lifts up our vision, but it searches us within as well. How universal is the spirit which we bring to God these days? How open are we in prayer to the God whose gospel is universal in both his judgments and his mercies? Robert Mackie, of Great Britain, has written in the *Interseminarian:* "An Indian Christian was once introduced to an assembly as 'a distinguished member of the Indian Christian community.' In starting to speak he said, 'I am a member of the Church of Christ and I happen to be an Indian.' Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, chairman of the World's Student Christian Federation, writes in an article on the Church and Europe, 'We shall speak not as Europeans who are also Christians, but as Christians who are called to live and work in Europe.' My message to the theological students of the U. S. A. today is simply, 'Remember that you are Christians, who happen to be Americans.' "

To keep our prayer life universal in spirit and in vision is the hope for helping the world into ways of peace and justice. So let us join the World Fellowship in prayer—

"That in the midst of the world's wars Christians may be kept free from hatred and bitterness and strengthened in their loyalty to Christ who is the Lord and Master of us all."

*Christians in Relation to War**

THERE are two classes of Christians in the world today. The absolute pacifist and the Christian opportunist. These are equally committed to the Kingdom of God, equally aware of the frightfulness and failure of war, equally willing to suffer for righteousness' sake; they differ only in their judgment as to what is the most effective method of reaching the Kingdom goal. Kagawa is said to combine these two in one person; at times he will run from an enemy or submit; at other times he will fight; his action depends on his judgment as to which is the most effective way of doing good.

The absolute pacifist sees only one worthy method—that method he uses at all times and on all occasions no matter what the provocation; he refuses to have any part in war as a destroying and destructive method; he may serve in time of war but not in the destructive activities of war. Our Quaker friends are conspicuous in this field but today they are joined by many others; our General Assembly has asked that the "conscientious objector" have fair consideration by the Government; the selective service bill makes provision for their consideration. For these absolute pacifists the cross of suffering love is the only consistent method of overcoming evil with good; to them, there is no temporary or intermediary method for reaching the goal; for them, the ideal method is the only justifiable method. Some of the most intelligent, most consecrated and bravest souls on earth are in this group.

Another group of Christians, equally intelligent, consecrated and brave do not find the answer to our problem as simple as does the absolute pacifist; we may call him the "Christian opportunist." We may believe that he is as completely Christian in his whole life as the absolute pacifist, but his unselfish judgment may differ from that of his brother who is an absolute pacifist. He hates war; he knows that war is not the weapon of the Kingdom of God. He is conscious of the fact that he has a double citizenship; that he is a member of the Kingdom of God and he is also a member of the state. He remembers that Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." He is a member of the state which is intended to be for the good of its members but is actually sin-burdened and sin-stained. So he

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* An excerpt from the report of the Committee on Social Education and Action of the Synod of Texas as adopted. The phrase "Christian Opportunist," suggested by Paul's word in Gal. 6: 10, was questioned and "Conscientious Defender," or "Conscientious Crusader" suggested as possible substitutes.

is faced with the dilemma of belonging to two governments; he has a responsibility to each.

War must never become the method of the Kingdom; as Robert E. Speer has said, "Christianity may not employ war for the purposes of the gospel." On the contrary, the state may be the custodian and defender of freedom, liberty and justice. Now in the mind of the Christian opportunist the loss of liberty, freedom and justice would be a greater loss to the good life of the world than the losses occasioned by their defense by war as frightful as war may be. Such a Christian opportunist may believe that at the call of his country he should go to war and that by so doing he will hasten the coming of the Kingdom more than he would by submission to those whose philosophy, ideology, and practice would destroy liberty, freedom, justice, and the whole reign of reason and love. The more such a Christian knows about the frightfulness of war and its failure as a method of settling differences, the more deeply will he sorrow and the more searching will be his penitence for the sinful condition of the world for which he and the church are partly responsible.

These two classes of Christians do exist in the church today. . . . Each class should be patient with the other and they should each recognize that it is possible to differ in opinion and judgment and yet agree in purpose. Time, perhaps eternity alone, can tell which judgment is best. These groups should pray for each other, work together as far as possible, and unselfishly seek to do the will of God. The responsibility rests upon each Christian to make the decision knowing that "God alone is the Lord of the conscience."

We recommend that it be the judgment of this synod that some sort of world society, organization or federation is necessary for the future good of the world; that we urge all Christian people, all ministers of religion, and all authorities of the state to use their best efforts to see that a better peace is written at the close of the present war than was written at the close of the World War.

We submit that it is our judgment that the present state of international anarchy is an intolerable situation and should be corrected; that if it becomes necessary for the sake of mankind for the great nations to surrender a part of their superior advantages that the great nations make the sacrifice for the good of the human race that the world may live in hope.

Study and Action

The world situation has tended inevitably to focus public interest in the church, as elsewhere, on problems abroad and on the foreign policy of our government in relation to them. Our attention has been challenged once more at home, however, by the National Defense Program. It will be a particularly helpful contribution to a well informed and considered public opinion if small groups in churches all over the country will meet to discuss those problems of immediate importance to the social balance and welfare of the nation in these trying days.

Do You Know Labor, by James Myers, of the Federal Council of Churches (the National Home Library Foundation, Washington, D. C.—50 cents), and ***Here Comes Labor,*** by Chester M. Wright, a newspaper man (Macmillan—60 cents), are books particularly helpful in answering questions about labor. Written by men who for years have known labor intimately, these books clearly and frankly answer the questions often heard and criticisms which you yourself have made.

Adrift on the Land, a pamphlet by Paul S. Taylor, a specialist in agricultural and labor problems, tells the story and defines the social and economic problem of the migrants, one of the many groups to whom the defense program does not bring even temporary relief from unemployment, insecurity, and discouragement. (Public Affairs Committee, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City, 10 cents.) ***Uprooted Americans,*** the current National Missions study, seeks an answer to the question: How can the churches serve shifting populations in America? Five pamphlets, edited by Benson Y. Landis, are sold in a packet at 60 cents. Discussion guides for use with young people and adults are available at 25 cents each. Additional material helpful for special programs, publicity, and similar purposes, is provided in a ***Handbook of Material on Migrants*** available from the Home Missions Council, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City. (10 cents.)

A Study of the Organization of Peace, a ten period study course, is based on the preliminary report of a commission to study the problems of the organization of peace, headed by Dr. James T. Shotwell, whose recent broadcast appears in this issue of Social Progress. Many Americans are convinced that whatever contribution the United States may make now, we must prepare for the peace which will follow the war. (The Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, 8 W. 40th Street, New York City—5 cents.)

The Town Meeting of the Air, an N.B.C. service feature, is one of the radio forums most useful to church groups. This year discussions will have one major theme each month. These include Foreign Affairs, National Defense, Democracy, Public Opinion, Economic Problems. Here is an excellent opportunity for church and community groups to hear competent speakers present varying viewpoints. Through the ***Current Issues Study Service,*** mailed ten days prior to each broadcast, advance preparation is possible. Following further discussion the group may formulate their own conclusions in the light of Christian principles and purposes. For information write, Town Hall Advisory Service, 123 West 43rd Street, New York City.

A Litany of Social Penitence

O God, our Father, who hast made us thy human children as one family in thee, so that what concerns any must concern all, we confess the evils we have done and the good we have left undone. We have spent our strength too often upon the tower of Babel of our own pride, and have forgotten the city that hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. We have been guilty of selfishness and strife when we should have learned to build in brotherhood. We have been content that we ourselves should prosper though many might be poor, that a few should feast while multitudes were famished both in body and in soul. O thou who hast taught us that whatsoever we sow that shall we also reap, help us to repent, before thy judgment comes.

For the clouded eyes that see no further
than our own advantage,

We confess our sin, O Lord.

For the dulled imagination that does not
know what others suffer,

We confess our sin, O Lord.

For the willingness to profit by injustice
which we have not striven to prevent,

We confess our sin, O Lord.

For the selfishness which is quick to
gain and slow to give,

We confess our sin, O Lord.

For the unconcern which makes us cry,
Am I my brother's keeper?

We confess our sin, O Lord.

But, O thou who art ever merciful, take away the evil of our conscious and unconscious wrongs, forgive us for our unfaithfulness to the vision of thy kingdom, and grant to us a better purpose for the days to come.

From acquiescence in old iniquities,

Save us, O Lord.

From indifference to the human cost of anything we covet,

Save us, O Lord.

From the greed that wastes the resources of this rich earth,

Save us, O Lord.

From the ignorance that wastes the lives of men and women through unemployment, poverty, and deprivation,

Save us, O Lord.

From the cruelty which exploits the needy and defenseless,

Save us, O Lord.

From the blasphemy against the spirit which sells the bodies and souls of children to the golden idol of success,

Save us, O Lord.

From false leadership in business and in government, and above all from feebleness in the people which lets false leaders rise,

Save us, O Lord.

Unless the Lord build the house,
Their labor is but vain that build it.
Unless the Lord keep the city,
The watchman waketh but in vain.
But he that sitteth upon the throne said,
Behold, I make all things new.

Even so, O God, let thy redemptive purposes work through us to build a new and better order on this earth, for the blessing of thy people and the glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

From "Lift Up Your Hearts" by W. Russell Bowie. Reprinted with permission of the author and the publisher, The Macmillan Company, New York.

About Books

Economic Research Studies. The Brookings Institution, Washington, D. C.

A review of the eleven titles constituting the books reporting the analyses and findings of the economic research studies which have been completed to date under the grants of the Maurice and Laura Falk Foundation must take into account the extraordinary conditions prevailing in the United States during the past decade. In 1930 the depression was gathering the momentum which was to make it the longest and severest in our history. Failure to recover our former standards of economic performance led increasing numbers of our people to conclude that the United States is now a matured and static nation economically. Finally, the closing years of the decade witnessed the canalizing of our economic activities into intensive preparation for defense.

Under these conditions of stress and strain our economy has, not unnaturally, manifested a first-rate case of "nerves" if, indeed, it has not suffered from more basic maladies. Faced with these conditions, the endeavor of the Falk Foundation has been to facilitate the efforts of competent scholars to take stock, thoroughly and without undue hurry, of just what economic forces are at play in the United States and what can be done to turn them to constructive effect. In the belief that in a democracy the people must be economically informed if the nation is to thrive, the Foundation has made it a condition of all its grants for research studies that the findings must be reported to the public in clear and simple lay language.

The eleven studies completed to date have but sketched the broad outlines of more sharply focused research investigations which will be prosecuted from time to time as the Foundation's resources permit. The first four of the completed studies—*America's Capacity to Produce, America's Capacity to Consume, The Formation of Capital,* and *Income and Economic Progress*—went behind the depression conditions of the early 1930's to inquire whether there was some basic maladjustment operating to deter our economic progress. They concluded that our economic attainments, even in the height of our prosperity in the late twenties, fell far short of realizing our full potentialities. A primary cause of this shortcoming was found in our failure to pass along to consumers, in the form of lower prices, enough of the gains accruing from mass production to promote the mass consumption which would call our full productive capacity into use, and a gradual and orderly reduction of the prices people pay for the things they buy was recommended.

The fifth study, *The Recovery Problem in the United States,* was addressed specifically to prevailing depression conditions. In essence, it recommended a program of recovery based on increased production and pointed out that the scarcity program then being followed would prolong and deepen the depression. *The Economics of the Iron and Steel Industry,* the sixth study in order of publication, was designed to examine the effects of the NRA on the iron and steel industry. But inasmuch as the Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional before the completion of the study the investigation turned its attention to internal problems of the industry. The next two studies, *The Income Structure of the United States* and *Industrial Price Policies and Economic Progress,* brought earlier studies up to date. The former supplemented the statistics on the distribution of the national income reported in *America's Capacity to Consume* and the latter revealed the progress in certain industries which had followed aggressively a policy of reducing their prices as production costs were lowered.

Government and Economic Life took cognizance of the expanding role that government is playing in the business affairs of the nation, analyzed the motives behind this expansion, and proposed criteria which must be observed in matters of public policy if our system of free enterprise is not to be stifled. *Productivity, Wages, and National Income* returned to the price problem and showed that in our economy, which is geared for mass production, price reductions and not wage increases are best calculated to stimulate the mass consumption required for mass production. *Wartime Control of Prices*, the most recent study, warns against the dangers of inflation as a result of rapidly stepped-up expenditures for defense and prescribes the specific preventives which must be employed if an orgy of defense-spending is not to induce an inflationary boom which will ultimately collapse to the great hurt of America's standard of living.

What influence such studies as these have had or will have on the economic welfare of the United States is, at the moment, not easy to say. During the decade from 1930 to 1940 purely economic considerations have scarcely had the attention they merit. But the longer the findings of impartial, scientific research into the problems of our economic order are ignored, the more urgently they will be needed when the nation makes up its mind, ultimately, to take stock of its problems, and to move aggressively to master them.

J. Steele Gow*

Religion Yesterday and Today, by Henry Sloane Coffin. Cokesbury Press. $1.75.

Here is a refreshing and heartening book. It is written both with joyful courage, and yet with sober restraint. As the Deems Lectures for New York University and the Jarrell Lectures in the same academic year at Emery University, this book is the product of an honest facing of the persistent and perplexing questions that beset religion and its adherents. Beginning with a chapter on "Evolutionary Science," and closing with pertinent and appropriate chapters on "The Social Conscience" and "The Church," it traces men's hopes, faiths, outlooks, and struggles in the field of religion for the recent past and the swift-changing present.

One feels a sense of the mighty currents of thought that moved the mid-nineteenth century when science offered an apparently unanswerable challenge to the tenets of religion. In the chapters on "The Divine Immanence" and "Biblical Criticism," the over-emphasis upon immanence as evidenced in the poetry and the philosophy of a sort of golden age of our Western civilization is pictured, and also the difficulties raised by critical study of the Old and New Testaments are clearly shown. Dr. Coffin is fair to both sides in these controversies, and, as an honest liberal, he makes plain that the *quest* for *truth* was then, as now, the only true standard which a valid religion seeks to vindicate.

The chapters on "Religious Experience" and "The Social Conscience" emphasize the values of psychological effort in understanding how religion works in the lives of individuals and types, and the application of religion to the social scene in the interest of a redeemed and ennobled humanity. Our author believes in the democratic way of life. He defines and defends it but he is not blind to its misinterpretation and misuse. This one statement is well worth pondering by those who glibly assert that democracy equates the Christian faith: "Democracy is an irrelevant word in connection with One whom men *do not elect* to his rulership, and whom *they cannot retire*."

Social workers and church people should

* Director of the Maurice and Laura Falk Foundation, Pittsburgh, Pa. Readers may borrow these books, published by the Brookings Institution, Washington, D. C., on request to the office of *Social Progress*. Please indicate by title the report desired.

give this chapter on the "Social Conscience" a careful reading.

WILLIAM LLOYD IMES

The Social Function of Religion, by E. O. James. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. $2.50.

The author, a prominent English anthropologist and churchman, facing the dangerous disintegration that is taking place in society and civilization, examines afresh, from the scientific and historical point of view, the foundations and cohesive forces in society.

In a most interesting way Mr. James presents briefly the development of religious ideas and practices and the development of our social institutions, beginning with the family and continuing on up to our modern complex world.

Again and again he voices his belief that "religion has been the dynamic and consolidating force of society supplying a system of values reflecting the revelation of the spiritual and moral order upon which a sound social life has been maintained. Some transcendent reference over and above and external to society itself has been necessary to bind together the component members in harmonious and creative relations with each other for the common good of the whole."

Religion is so vital to life and society, he maintains, that its teaching must be "laid on impregnable foundations," greater emphasis must be given to it "in the curriculum of schools and universities." Religion must be so received and practiced by people, he concludes, "that it becomes the directive force of their lives." "In a distracted age religion will achieve its purpose and function only if it is presented . . . as nothing less than the inbreaking on human history of God incarnate bringing to a world undone the gift of a new and endless life."

This is a heartening and helpful book for these times.

HARVEY E. HOLT

A Surgeon's Life, by J. M. T. Finney. Putnam's. $3.50.

There are few autobiographies which spontaneously bring to mind a classic scripture passage. This autobiography does. It is one of the best commentaries we know on Galatians 5: 22-23. Love is here, love to God and for men especially in their hours of supreme need. Joy is here, the joy which always follows living on the highest levels. Peace is here, the peace of God which keeps both heart and mind in balanced equilibrium and which instills confidence in others whose hearts and minds are out of poise. Patience is here, patience with the frailties to which the flesh is heir and which are often manifested when vitality is low or anxiety is great. Gentleness is here, the gentleness which indicates great reserves of power, spiritual and intellectual, ready for use but restrained because of the need of hurting to heal.

Goodness is here, not on parade, but pervading a life of distinguished usefulness in an amazing number of areas of vital importance. Faith is here, a deep religious faith which undergirded the author in all the multifold relations he at various periods of his life sustained to men of high and low estate.

Humility is here, a humility which leads the autobiographer to write much about his associates over the years and so little directly about himself as to make it necessary to read between the lines to maintain the continuity of the life story of the author.

Self mastery is here, in the use of time and treasure and talent, as a faithful steward conscious of a high responsibility to his Lord, his church, his country, his city and his home, and his calling in life.

Dr. Finney is and has been for years one of the most distinguished ruling elders who have ever served our church. As Vice Moderator of the General Assembly, as a member of the General Council, as an associate on many committees of na-

tional, state, and local church importance he has given outstanding service. Nor is the church unmindful of the service Dr. Finney has rendered, without money and without price, to scores of its ministers and members in need of surgical treatment united as this always was in Dr. Finney's practice with a deep personal interest. His life is most worthy of such a permanent record as this book affords and probably the record is all the more impressive and influential because of its modesty and simplicity.

LEWIS SEYMOUR MUDGE

Fame Is the Spur, by Howard Spring. Viking Press. $2.75.

Of the many labor organizations in many lands, the British Labour Party has been the most friendly to Christianity and to Christian institutions. Working within the democratic structure of Britain it was strong enough to place its members in control of the government. Then its own leaders when faced with England's financial crisis turned the government over to Labour's traditional enemies. Whatever may be an individual's opinion regarding the Labour Party its rise to power was one of the most romantic as well as significant events of the past fifty years.

Howard Spring, the author of the widely read *My Son, My Son,* makes the dramatic story of the Labour Party in Britain the basis of *Fame Is the Spur,* which will be one of the discussed novels of the winter. In any discussion of the plight of England, Chamberlain will be blamed, but it was Ramsey MacDonald who scuttled the Labour government and put the Conservatives back into office. How did Labour come to power and why did they sacrifice their hardly won gains? In brilliant fashion, Howard Spring makes that story live.

The central character of the book, J. Hamer Shawcross, epitomizes all the influences which made the Labour Party. Born in the slum, influenced by Marxist followers of Engles, he became a Methodist lay preacher. Drifting about the world he learned much of labor in many lands. When the Labour movement started he was caught up by the Fabians, worked with trade union officials and with a politician's self-seeking he went up with the Labour Party. When the split came he stayed with Ramsey MacDonald, and a life long friend shouted, "I would have followed you to Kingdom Come, but now I find I followed a bloody Judas."

This is a very human drama with the fight for labor's rights making the book far more than just another novel.

JOHN F. MULHOLLAND

The People Talk, by Benjamin Appel. E. P. Dutton & Company. $3.

There is a subtle significance in Benjamin Appel's new book, and one does not catch it in the first casual reading of it. The author reports a journey around America, a journey of listening to the common people as they talk. It is the collective voice of these people and what they say that gives the volume its significance.

First is the fact that the people dare to talk, for this is democratic America. Then there is the fact of what they reveal, their insecurity, their fear, their hope, their groping for meaning in the economic dislocation of our time.

It is further significant that we are so interested in what the common people have to say. It has not been so long since it made no difference what the slum-dwellers or the textile workers, the farmers or the industrial workers, the migrants or the small shop owners, the hog-killers and loggers and miners and drillers and fishermen thought or felt. Somehow, though, in these last turbulent years, they have become articulate, and we must listen to what they say, for it is compelling.

It is finally significant that through all of the seething, groping, moving symphony of voices, we hear the individuals bespeak-

ing their faith in the orderly processes of democracy. It is appropriate that this should be so, for the book is the voice of a democratic people. In it the obscure and forgotten little individuals who are America speak to a friendly and inquiring novelist-reporter. He tells us what they say.

PAUL MCFARLIN

A Federation for Western Europe, by W. I. Jennings. Macmillan. $2.50.

On the walls of the room in which he died, Victor Hugo is said to have written a prophecy that there would one day be a United States of the World but that first there would be a United States of Europe. Apparently Mr. Jennings agrees with this prediction. His plan includes only western Europe, although he starts from the assumption that "ultimately" complete international government will be necessary. Hence his book differs in detail only from Clarence Streit's *Union Now* which includes among the fifteen member democracies only three outside western Europe.

This book is based on the assumption that Germany will be defeated, otherwise, as the author admits, most of the arguments become irrelevant. The plan of the Federal Union group is to provide a workable alternative to the only other solution which is the dismemberment of Germany. The scheme contemplates that control of all armed forces would be vested in the federation and that western Europe would become a single economic unit. This would render war in western Europe impossible and release for constructive tasks the energies of the peoples hitherto devoted to competition in armaments.

The proposed federation would provide on an international basis the government by law, which the United States has achieved internally. The author suggests that if the proposals of this book were accepted, they would provide an honorable settlement for post-war Europe "under which the immense energy of the German nation could be used for constructive purposes and the best elements of German culture spread around the world."

Such a book should be read by all thoughtful people who hope for something stronger and of more permanent quality than a Versailles at the conclusion of the present debacle. If groups of intelligent people everywhere could get together to discuss this plan and "rend it into little pieces and fit together something infinitely better" the purpose of the author would have been achieved.

FRED E. LUCHS

Revolution, by Robert Hunter. Harpers. $3.

This is one of the most unique books that I have ever read. Affirming that he does not accept the principles of revolution as a part of his personal creed, the author proceeds to demonstrate that a study of its technique and operation is a decidedly fascinating one. The resultant book is a fair and accurate analysis of why, when, and how revolutions occur.

Mr. Hunter is very careful to limit the scope of his study. He informs his reader at the outset that "revolution, as a term, will be used here only when speaking of those movements which have suddenly overthrown and materially altered previous existing institutions, and to those counter-revolutions which have restored in some measure the old structures or built new ones whose value, purpose, and permanence the future alone reveals."

The book is no merely academic treatment of the philosophy of revolution. It is resplendent with historical examples, ranging all the way from the biblical Joseph to Joseph Stalin. The last section of the volume, "The Collapse of a Civilization," seems somewhat irrelevant and one wonders just why the author added it. It in no way detracts however, from the previous contents of the book.

THOMAS FRANKLYN HUDSON

Facts and Figures

The American Friends Service Committee will "carry on its efforts unabated" to feed, clothe, and shelter as many children as possible with such supplies as may be bought in Europe or taken through the blockade by special permission of Great Britain. This statement was made on December 11 by Clarence E. Pickett, the executive secretary. Most of the food used by the American Quakers abroad, Mr. Pickett declared, is purchased in Switzerland while "some foods are purchased locally for free distribution to the destitute." Mr. Pickett stated further that these purchases total about $70,000 a month and "American Quaker workers in unoccupied France are feeding more than 30,000 children daily. These include 10,000 new born infants and 20,000 school children." Mr. Pickett saw encouragement in Britain's willingness to permit medical supplies to enter Europe freely and hope that "milk for infants, children and invalids, and vitamin concentrates" might be listed under this category.

"Keep out," said Stuart Chase speaking recently before 6,000 Colorado teachers in the Denver auditorium. It is absurd, he declares, to think of America's going to war. Every poll shows we are opposed to it, yet we keep talking about it. "The American attitude is something like the man who said, 'I gotta get drunk, but, Gosh, how I dread it.' . . . As for Europe, there is no hope until there is a United States of Europe. In that respect, the U. S. is a grown-up nation and Europe still is in the kindergarten stage," declared Mr. Chase.

Released time for religious education has been granted to students in the public school system of New York City by the vote of the Board of Education. This action is in conformity with the provisions of the McLaughlin Bill as signed by Governor Lehman on April 9, 1940. This significant event caps the work of the Religious Education Council of the Greater New York Federation of Churches over a number of years. This group is taking the leadership of Protestant forces in meeting this opportunity. Recognizing that ultimate success of the plan might be jeopardized by hasty action, careful plans for cooperative activity by Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish groups has met with encouraging success.

Church meets labor. In every city that is being visited by the National Christian Mission, plans have been made for conferences with labor organizations. Rev. Cameron P. Hall, director of the Department of Social Education and Action of the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, will make these contacts in Washington, Oregon, and California during February, 1940. An extremely sympathetic hearing is reported by the Federal Council of Churches, which adds: "The Mission is helping to throw a bridge of understanding and fellowship across what has come to be an all-too-wide chasm between the church and labor."

Race Relations Sunday, Feb. 9, 1941, will mark Interracial Brotherhood Month in the churches. Churches are urged to enlist the cooperation of ministers, editors, radio managers, and group leaders in their community in this observance. The Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches has prepared an attractive poster and new program material for use on this occasion and throughout the month. These include services for various age groups in the church, speakers' data sheet and suggestions for projects. Complete packets of these materials at 5 cents each or $3.50 a hundred may be ordered from the Federal Council of

Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

What can Peace Councils do now? The Syracuse (N. Y.) Peace Council answers: We shall maintain unshaken our purpose to help keep this country out of this war; continue our community program of education on peace-war issues; give publicity to national legislation affecting peace issues; aid individuals or groups with problems of peace education; help to guard the civil and religious liberties on which our nation was founded; seek to promote international goodwill and understanding by sharing in the task of aid to refugees in this country and to the starving millions abroad.

Aliens face deportation. More than 3,100,000 aliens have registered since August 27, 1940, yet it is believed that there are 500,000 others who have failed to do so. The Justice Department and postal officials charged with carrying out the Registration Act state that there will be no extension of the time limit beyond December 26. Every effort through radio broadcasts and by other means is being made to remind the delinquents that they risk conviction as felons subject to deportation. All aliens must register, including children under 14 who may be registered by parents or guardians. Only a small percentage of the aliens, it is believed, are deliberately avoiding registration. The remainder are either uncertain of their status as citizens or fearful that their entry into the United States will be questioned. The status of the latter cannot be hurt by registration, but failure to register will place them in double jeopardy, it was officially stated.

A bill was introduced in the House on November 28 by Representative Celler, Democrat of New York. Its purpose is to permit aliens who entered the United States lawfully as visitors but who are unable to return to their homes because of war conditions to remain in this country and be charged against quotas of their nations. The majority of aliens in this country, Mr. Celler states, are under a cloud of distress. They can neither remain in the United States, return to their countries, nor seek employment here.

High school students study religion. The latest news on the plans for weekday religious education in Pittsburgh, Pa., indicate that there are 43,000 high school pupils; about 7,000 are already enrolled in weekday classes. Securing teachers is one of the most important problems. In the majority of cases, according to the reports, lay people, many of them high school teachers who are church workers, have been engaged. Teachers are paid by assessing congregations according to their booked membership. Classrooms in churches within seven minutes' walking distance from schoolhouses must be secured. Some churches offered their facilities free, while others demand pay. On the whole the plan seems to be working well. The first course is "The Life of Christ" and excellent teaching materials have been provided. Catholics and Jews are leading the way, providing their own courses.

From 35 states came 875 people to participate in the National Rural Forum held in connection with the recent annual gathering of the American Rural Country Life Association at Purdue University, of which Benson Y. Landis is executive secretary. Included were delegates to several other organizations of farm men and women. Sessions were devoted to rural education, the rural church, recreation, economic aspects of agriculture, rural sociology, art and dramatics in rural life, and opportunities for rural youth. Well over 200 persons attended the sessions given over exclusively to the discussion of the rural church. Discussing the kind of rural churches needed, Mrs. Calvin

Perdue, Hoosier farm woman, said, "We have a right to expect our church to minister to the spiritual and social needs of the family, to manifest an interest in a diversified program to keep our young people happy and contented on the farm, and to have a minister who is interested not only in soul salvation, but in soil salvation as well. Any church that does not realize these things might as well close shop."

Pastors are restive over munitions boom. Said a minister of Pittsburgh: "One of our great preachers spent a night in one of our hotels recently. Next day he said to me: 'I hail from a small city and last night I could not sleep. All night I felt, rather than heard, the deep diapason of Pittsburgh's industrial heart.' I, on the other hand, cannot sleep in the quiet country. The unearthly silence frightens me. Our vast mills are operating at capacity. Vulcan's forge reddens the skies. One shudders to think that armaments in the making here may cause earth and sea to be reddened by men's blood. We still cry out against war!"

Anti-war group gives draft advice. The Seattle section of the "Keep America Out of War Congress" has completed three months of intensive work which centered in opposition to the conscription bill. Four out of six of Washington's representatives and one senator voted against it. With the passing of the bill Floyd W. Shmoe, secretary of the local group, announces the establishment of a committee which will maintain an office where legal advice, information and help will be given conscientious objectors.

Major problems confronting the churches of America in this critical day was the theme of comprehensive study made at Atlantic City Dec. 7-13 in what was probably the largest assembly of leaders of the various communions that ever has met in America. For the first time in history, also, joint sessions were held by seven cooperative agencies of the American churches, each of which in addition met in its own separate business sessions, all in connection with the biennial meeting of the Federal Council of Churches.

One product of the joint sessions was a lengthy statement recommended by them to the Federal Council for its formal commendation to the various communions. The statement, a draft "program for American churches in time of war," is designed to clarify the mind of the churches regarding the world crisis. It was presented by John Foster Dulles, a Presbyterian expert in international law who acted at Atlantic City on behalf of an unofficial committee of churchmen including Drs. Henry Sloane Coffin, William Adams Brown, Henry A. Atkinson, A. L. Warnshuis, Walter W. VanKirk, and others.

The Federal Council also approved seminar reports on leading problems at home.

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Current Films

These estimates of current films are offered in response to the action of the General Assembly 1932, requesting such a previewing service to be made available from the Department of Social Education and Action. The following evaluations are based on reports of ten groups of national organizations judging pictures in Hollywood.

Bitter Sweet (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) (Cast: Jeanette McDonald, Nelson Eddy, George Sanders, Ian Hunter, Felix Bressart, Edward Ashley). Herbert Stothart, musical director, has treated the well-known melodies of the Noel Coward operetta to a symphonic enhancement that is eminently satisfying. The technicolor photography for the most part is superb, with some added flourishes which only the cinema could supply. The operetta lends itself perfectly to the screen and the always favorite numbers, "I'll See You Again" and "Zigeuner" (exquisite ballet in cream and sepia suggested by the red chalk sketches of Da Vinci and Michael Angelo) were never given more beautifully. Commended to all who enjoy good entertainment with beautiful music. **Mature-Family** (over 14).

Escape (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) (Cast: Norma Shearer, Robert Taylor, Conrad Veidt, Nazimova, Felix Bressart, Albert and Elsa Basserman, Philip Dorn, Bonita Granville). Tense and engrossing is this screen adaptation of Ethel Vance's widely read novel with a notable cast, excellent technical values, and few changes from the original except in minor detail. The restrained characterizations are profoundly impressive, and the sinister background of inexorable cruelty and oppression which dominates the picture, is suggested rather than actually portrayed. Well-adapted music heightens the effectiveness of atmosphere and action. The grim story concerns the experiences of a young man, an American, who arrives in Germany and undertakes to rescue his mother, a once great actress, from a concentration camp, where charged with treason, she has been sentenced to death. **Adults.**

The Letter (Warner Bros.) (Cast: Bette Davis, Herbert Marshall, Gale Sondergaard, James Stephenson). A powerful, deeply moving drama, depicting a bitter, tragic story of human emotions gone mad. Engrossing entertainment because of the expert acting of Bette Davis, as the jealous, tortured murderess, the charming support of Herbert Marshall, as her trusting, devoted husband, and the fine performance of James Stephenson as the defense attorney. The sympathetic direction of William Wyler makes the most of each dramatic scene, while atmosphere and mood are sustained and heightened by Max Steiner's fine musical underscoring and the exquisite photography. The conviction or freedom of a woman for murdering a man hinges on her recovery and suppression of an incriminating letter. **Adults.**

Little Nellie Kelly (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) (Cast: Judy Garland, George Murphy, Charles Winninger, Douglas McPhail, Arthur Shields, Rita Page). Wholesome, simple and human, this musical presentation is enhanced by a good story and sincere acting. The Irish airs contribute greatly to the atmosphere. The plot deals with the struggle of a sweet, motherless Irish girl to overcome the strict discipline of her grandfather, emphasizing the unhappiness caused by the selfishness of one generation to another. The direction, casting, dialogue are all that can be desired in a picture which is charming in its entire lack of sophistication. The Irish brogue, with its whimsical turns, adds quaintness and humor. The migration to the United States of the family, their reading of the Constitution and their profound feeling on becoming citizens are significant features. **Family.**

The Long Voyage Home (Walter Wanger-United Artists) (Cast: John Wayne, Thomas Mitchell, Ian Hunter, Barry Fitzgerald, Wilfrid Lawson, Mildred Natwick). Masterfully directed drama of the sea, sombre and realistic. It is eloquent because of minimum of dialogue; the pauses and silences are effective. It is a play of stark realism, of rugged, vital men and startlingly real atmosphere that cannot leave one unmoved. It is not a story in the accepted sense, but a series of experiences of a group of men who sail the sea because they cannot escape its call. It portrays the rough but deep fellowship of men brought together by hardships shared—just a slice of life and tragedy at sea. The music of Richard Hageman is symbolic and unforgettable. His introduction of "Harbor Lights" is most effective. **Adults.**

North West Mounted Police (Paramount) (Cast: Gary Cooper, Madeleine Carroll, Paulette Goddard, Preston Foster, Robert Preston, George Bancroft, Lynne Overman, Akim Tamiroff). Set against a background of gorgeous northwest mountain scenery, this adventure story of the "Mounties" is told in beautiful and rich technicolor. The plot, although somewhat complicated and at times incredulous, moves at a fast and exciting pace, carrying its suspense to the final scene. Strong individual characterizations are interpreted by a well-chosen cast. The music is stirring and symbolic. A Texas ranger is sent to Canada to bring back a man for murder committed in the States. There the ranger joins the Mounted Police, aids in suppressing an insurrection, and after many exciting adventures succeeds in getting his man. **Family.**

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